

# CONDENSED REPORT

## Trinity's Tenements

A Report on the condition of all residence buildings owned and controlled by Trinity Church, as found on inspections from June 24th to October 12th, 1909

Made for  
The Tenement House Committee  
of the  
Charity Organization Society of the City of New York

Tenement House Committee,  
105 East 22d Street.

*To the Rector, Churchwardens and Vestrymen of Trinity Church.*

I forward herewith, for your information, a condensed report setting forth the conditions disclosed in the Trinity residence property as a result of the intensive investigation made by the secretary of this Committee during the summer and fall.

We shall be especially interested to know what the authorities of Trinity Church Corporation purpose doing to improve this class of property. If there is any way in which we can aid in the development of plans for its improvement, please consider us at your service.

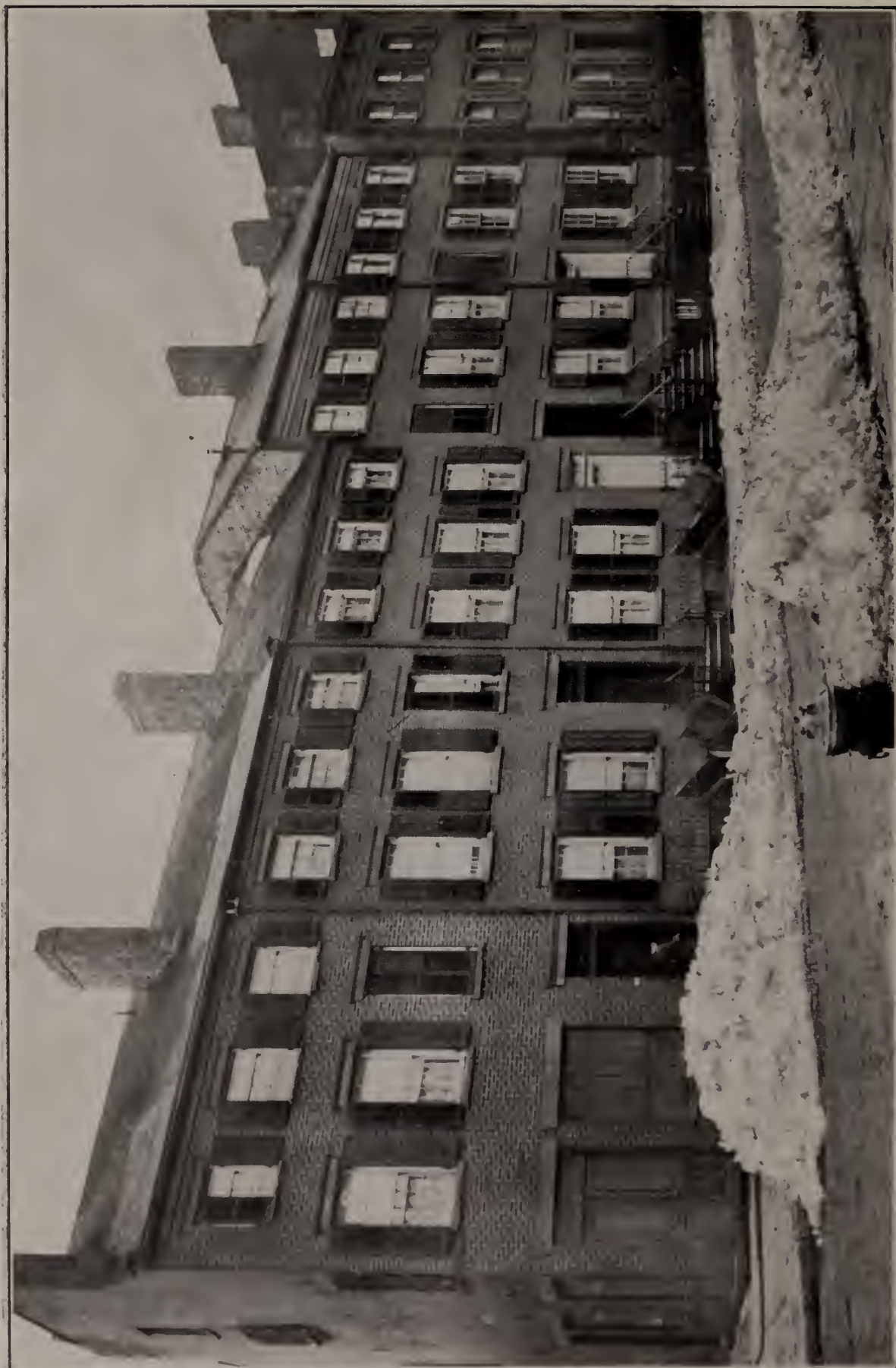
Yours sincerely,

LAWRENCE VEILLER,

Director.

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TYPICAL TRINITY DWELLING HOUSES.

## TRINITY'S TENEMENTS.

At the request of the Property Committee of Trinity Church, after consultation with Robert W. deForest, president of the Charity Organization Society, and former Tenement House Commissioner, an exhaustive examination dealing with the actual conditions, structural, sanitary and social, of the tenements and other residence buildings owned by Trinity Church in New York City, has just been completed.

This report covers the results of the examination.

It refers to the buildings owned by Trinity Church, as distinguished from the buildings not owned by the Church, but located on land which is owned by it, but leased on long or short terms.

The purpose of the investigation was to give to the Trinity Vestry in a complete and accurate way full information with regard to its houses, particularly from the point of view of tenement law and sanitary regulation. It was understood by Mr. deForest that the future policy of Trinity Church—whether to tear down some of these houses and turn the land to business purposes, or to erect model tenements in their place, or to alter them over—was under consideration. It had been rumored that Trinity contemplated the abandonment of a large part of its tenement and dwelling properties and the devotion of the land now occupied by them to business buildings—a change of policy which would have worked great hardship to the hundreds of people who for years had been its tenants and might prove disadvantageous to the community from the social point of view. The Tenement House Committee of the Charity Organization Society, under these circumstances, undertook this investigation, believing that it could serve the community by aiding the owner of so large a number of residence properties to decide whether to maintain them as such at a proper social and sanitary standard or to give them up to other uses.

The investigation and report have been made by E. W. Dinwiddie, Secretary of the Tenement House Committee of the New York Charity Organization Society, a former tenement house inspector in the New York City Tenement Department, and an investigator of housing conditions in Philadelphia. The inspections were made between the end of June and the early part of October, 1909. The general direction of the work has been in the hands of Lawrence Veiller, the Director of the Tenement House Committee, formerly First Deputy Tenement House Commissioner of New York City, and Secretary of the State Tenement House Commission.

No effort has been spared to get at the real conditions. The search-light has been turned on every phase of the housing problem and every bad condition found has been disclosed.

The investigation has concerned itself only with those houses owned by Trinity Church and under its control. It was originally sought to have it include also the houses owned by others and located on land owned by Trinity, but this effort had to be abandoned as it was found that Trinity had no control over these houses and the investigator was unable to gain access to the buildings for purposes of inspection, the owners refusing admittance, insisting that as matter of law Trinity had nothing to do with their houses and no right to enter them or secure entrance to others.

The results of the investigation have been a surprise to those making it. The following summary condensed from the individual inspection reports gives the main facts brought out:

The inspection covered 334 houses, comprising 810 apartments, and included all the houses owned by Trinity and used for dwelling purposes; that is, as tenement buildings, two-family houses, or private houses with or without shops, factories and the like in the same building.

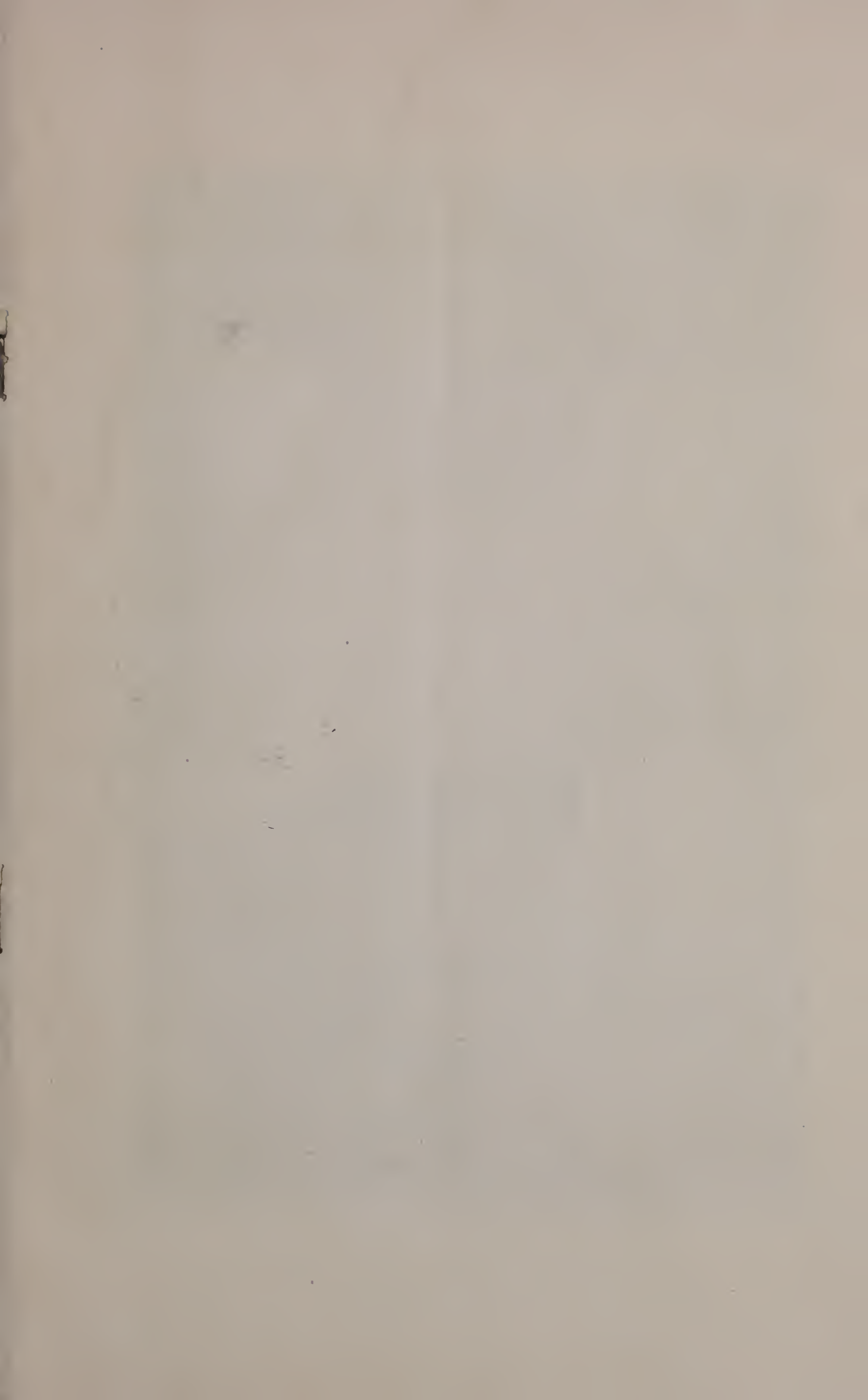
#### SANITARY FEATURES.

The Trinity houses are comparatively free from overcrowding, whether measured by density per acre, number of persons to the house or number to the room; and in this particular they present a marked contrast to the tenements and crowded dwellings in the immediate neighborhood.

The tallest Trinity dwellings are five stories high and of these there are only five. The great majority of the houses are but three stories or three stories and basement in height and frequently the third story is not a full story, but an attic with a sloping roof. Although many of the houses have very deep yards, not a single rear tenement or rear dwelling house is found at the back of a lot behind a front building and only in one instance is anything resembling such a condition seen. This is the case of a group of six small houses built on a court opening from the street.

#### LIGHT AND VENTILATION.

"Culture tube" air shafts to light and ventilate living rooms, one of the most objectionable features of the ordinary tenements, are conspicuously absent. Most of the houses apparently





TYPICAL LIGHT BEDROOM.

were erected before the period when these were introduced. The living rooms either open on the street or the yard or on a yard court, or have skylights in the roof, or else get their ventilation from other rooms or from the halls. An exception should be noted, however, in one of the groups of houses built as model tenements some years ago. In this some of the rooms have windows on large box shafts roofed over at the top with skylights. These model tenements represent an advance over the then prevalent type of buildings, but are not up to the present day standards. Narrow yard spaces so-called, less than four feet deep, between the rear of one building and another house and supposed to supply light and air for back rooms are also lacking, fortunately for the tenants. Twenty-two houses, including some corner buildings, some buildings on irregular shaped lots and some in which a first-story shop runs far back have no yards, but deep yard spaces as a rule are characteristic of the Trinity properties.

Of all the rooms 89% are outside rooms opening by windows or in a few exceptional cases by skylights, directly to the outer air. The remaining 11% are interior rooms, in a few instances having windows to box shafts, but usually getting light and air from doors or doors and windows to other rooms or to halls. Four-fifths of the interior rooms are in apartments extending all the way from the street to the yard, and thus having a through current of air. In one house containing such rooms and having through ventilation for each apartment the tenant's comment to the investigator was "The big windows are grand. You open them at night and you get a breeze; it is a regular Coney Island." Of all the interior rooms about one-third were found to be insufficiently ventilated and lighted as then arranged and occupied. Only three occupied "third interior" rooms, such as exist in great numbers in the ordinary tenements of New York were found; that is, interior rooms separated from the outside air by two intervening rooms. All of these had large windows to adjoining rooms.

The importance of light halls increases with the number of families and persons using them. In the Trinity properties, even in the small houses, the great majority of the halls were well lighted and ventilated. Many had outside windows and skylights. Dark halls in any of the houses were wholly exceptional.

#### BASEMENT LIVING ROOMS.

In 42% of the houses, basement rooms partly below the level of the ground were used for living purposes. Altogether there

were 257 such rooms, of which, however, only 51 were used for sleeping rooms. Most of the basement rooms were not objectionable, being light, well ventilated and apparently dry and used as kitchens, dining rooms, or laundry rooms by families having bedrooms on the upper floors. This was the ordinary type of Trinity house with basement rooms classed as habitable. Usually there was no cellar under the basement rooms, but there was frequently a small air space between the floor and the ground. The living room floors were all of wood. Rooms such as those described above are very much better than the ordinary basement living rooms found in the older tenement houses throughout the city.

In a small minority of the cases the basement apartments in Trinity's houses were of a less sanitary type than that mentioned above. Fifteen of the basement rooms were unsanitary.

In 22 houses in all there were entire apartments in the basement stories. Most of these, however, were dry, well lighted and ventilated and not unhealthful.

#### CELLAR CONDITIONS.

The absence of concrete floors in cellars is a very common condition in old small houses everywhere. Even an earth-floored cellar cannot be said to constitute an unsanitary condition if it is properly ventilated and free from dampness, and if too free communication with the floors above is avoided or if the story above is used only for business purposes. A few instances of damp unhealthful cellars exist in the Trinity properties, usually with doors only and these kept closed.

Although, as a rule, not wholly light, except where used for living purposes, most of the cellars had means of lighting and ventilation by windows, area gratings or the like, in addition to the ordinary door openings.

Over three-fourths of the cellars were dry or fairly dry. This does not mean water tight and damp-proof, but in as dry a condition as their type of flooring permits. Forty-seven cellars were perceptibly damp in whole or in part from a variety of causes. Only four of the 334 houses had any accumulation of stagnant water on the cellar floor. In all the cases this was evidently a recent condition and in one instance it was reported to be the result of some repair work just completed. Two more cellars were partly wet.

The majority of the cellars were clean or fairly clean. Forty-three cellars (13% of the total) were dirty because of accumu-

lations of rubbish or of the condition of floors, walls or ceilings; other cellars had the ceiling and walls covered with dust, apparently the accumulations of several years, and festooned with heavy cobwebs. Three cellars were noted as partly dirty.

#### HOUSE DRAINS.

House drains could be inspected in comparatively few cases. There were a few instances in which workmen were found digging up the pipes, where earthenware drains were disclosed. Old drains of this type are frequently broken. It would not be possible to find out how many Trinity properties there are with such class of drains without digging them up. Such drains as were above the floor level and open to inspection were of iron, and in the majority of cases in good or fair condition. Obstructed house drains were not found in any of the buildings.

#### CLEANLINESS OF ROOMS, HALLS AND STAIRS.

In 62% of the houses the walls and ceilings of the living rooms were clean or fairly clean. In the remaining 38% of the buildings some, or in a few cases all, of the living rooms had more or less dirty walls and ceilings. Actually filthy walls and ceilings were rare, although a very small number were found.

In over two-thirds of the buildings the walls and ceilings of the halls and stairs were clean or fairly clean. In the remainder the hall walls and ceilings on some or all of the floors were dirty enough to need renovating. Actual filthy conditions of walls and ceilings were seen in only two or three instances.

#### SANITARY ACCOMMODATIONS.

In regard to foul "school sinks" (sewer-connected privies), which were an undesirable feature in many of the older houses of the city, the situation of the Trinity property may be fairly summed up in three words: there are none. Nor was there any evidence of the recent removal of such appliances.

There were 639 water closets provided for the 334 houses. Forty-two per cent. of the families in the houses had separate accommodations, the use of which was not shared with other tenants. The few cases where one closet was used by more than two families were almost solely in the tenements. Sixty per cent. of the closets for all the houses were outside the buildings.

The outside closets were necessarily of the long hopper type. The present plumbing regulations forbid the installation of this type within the houses; but the Octavia Hill Association in Philadelphia, in its model cottages, which are small houses on the order of the Trinity properties, makes a practice of installing long hopper closets in the yard. Of the closets within the houses 97 are of this type.

Eighty-six per cent of all the closets were clean or fairly clean and 14% dirty or somewhat foul. The extremely foul conditions sometimes seen in the poorer houses in New York were not found in the Trinity properties.

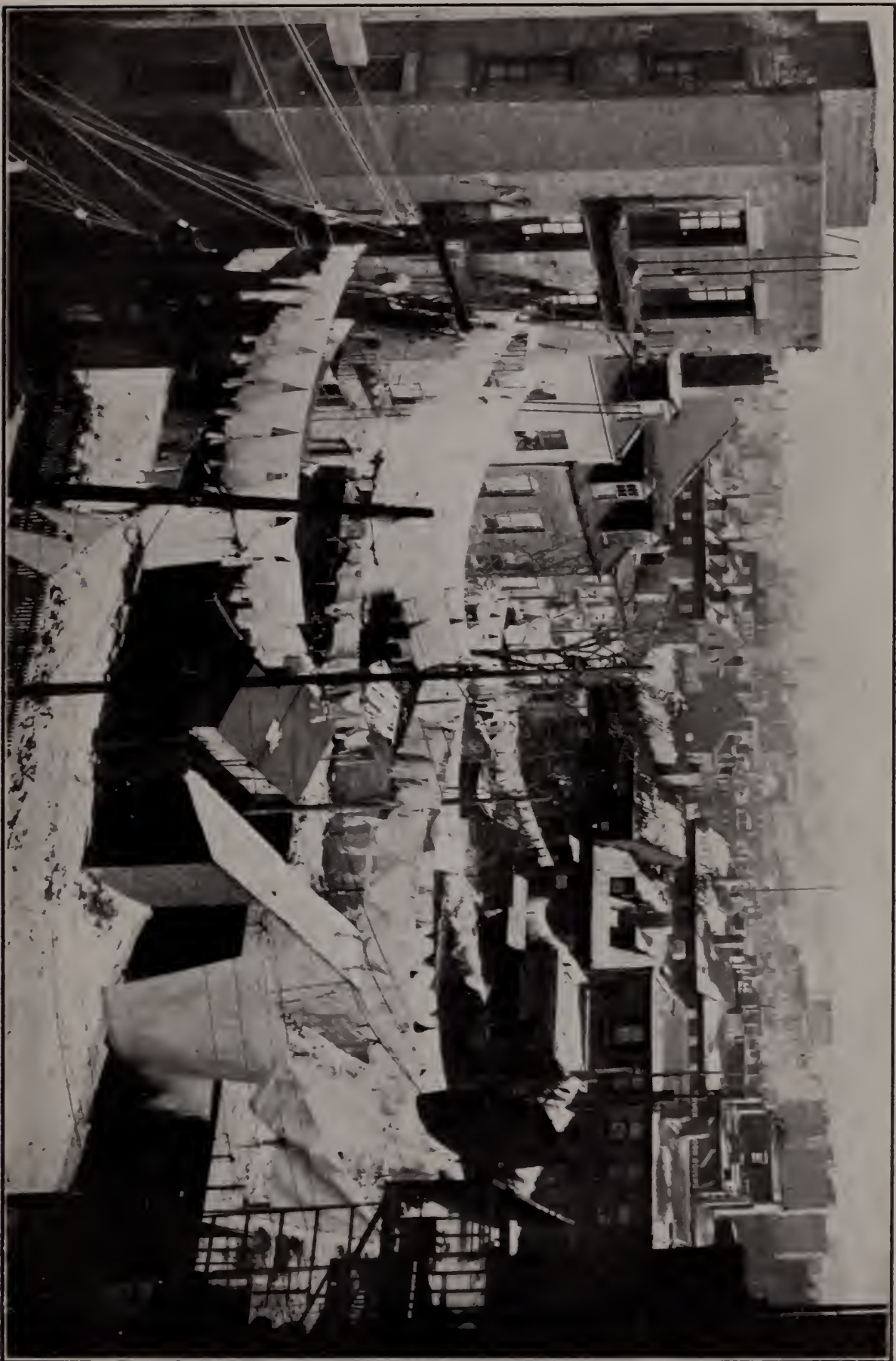
### WATER SUPPLY.

All but five of the houses had water supply within the building. Almost invariably there was water on every occupied floor, or on every floor except the attic or parlor floor. This was true of the one and two-family houses as well as the tenements.

Eighty-five per cent of the families had separate water supply. The remaining families used sinks or basins in common with other families. One hundred and twelve houses had fixed laundry tubs and 67 were provided with baths. The laundry tubs were usually of wood lined with sheet metal or of soapstone but a few unlined wooden tubs were found. The baths were of various types; some were open porcelain tubs; some open enamelled iron, and some of metal enclosed in wood. A very few sewer connected sinks, basins and baths were found not to be trapped. No instances of wholly inadequate water supply for sinks and basins were seen, but in a number of cases there was not a strong flow. Very frequently water would not run on an upper floor when it was being drawn on a lower floor or in the yard.

### YARDS, COURTS AND AREAS.

Yards paved with concrete were very rare, though a small number were seen in the Trinity properties. The great majority were paved with brick or flag or had merely an earth surface or else some combination of these materials. Small flower gardens and brick walks were common and made the back yards very attractive. The areas were usually paved with brick



INTERIOR OF BLOCK.

SHOWS DEEP YARD SPACES, GIVING ABUNDANT LIGHT AND AIR. IN SUMMER THESE ARE FLOWER GARDENS.



KITCHEN OVER STABLE.

ONLY STABLE FOUND. TWO HORSES KEPT. ONE FAMILY LIVING ABOVE.

although some were of concrete. In 23% of the houses the paving of the yards, courts and areas was more or less defective, meaning that the surfaces were broken or irregular, interfering with proper drainage. In 18% they were not properly graded. In 24 cases the unoccupied spaces were dirty. In 33 cases they had some accumulations of rubbish. The remainder were clean and well kept.

#### RAIN PIPES.

The majority of the rain leaders in front and rear were sewer-connected or discharged into gutters leading directly into sewer-connected drains and were in good or fair condition, but in a few cases the pipes were broken or leaking, pouring out streams of water over imperfectly drained sections of the yard.

#### GARBAGE DISPOSAL.

The Trinity residence properties were remarkably free from unsanitary conditions resulting from carelessness in the disposal of garbage. In two cases garbage from restaurants was allowed to become offensive.

#### UNSANITARY PLACES OF BUSINESS.

One hundred and seventy-five houses (about one-half of the total number) contained one or more shops or other places of business. In only two cases were these of such a character or in such a state as to make an unhealthful condition. One of these was a stable and mineral water storage room on the first floor of a house where one family occupied the upper floors. This was the only instance in a Trinity-owned house inspected of a stable in the same building or on the same lot with a residence.

There were no rag shops, junk shops or second-hand clothing shops in the houses and no saloons or gambling places. Nor were there any houses of prostitution.

#### KEEPING OF ANIMALS.

Apart from the cases of the one stable previously described and one bird and animal shop, no animals excepts dogs, cats,

canary birds and parrots were found on the premises, except in ten instances where chickens were kept and three where pigeons were found. The pigeons were a nuisance; the chickens, on the other hand, were out of doors and, as kept in the Trinity properties, in deep yards, were not a nuisance except in one case where the yard was not properly cleaned and the chickens were allowed to enter the cellar kitchen.

#### STRUCTURAL CONDITIONS AND FIRE DANGER.

There were only three frame houses but there were 158 partly brick and partly frame. The remaining 173 had the outer construction of brick with the exception only of small wooden stoops, porches or galleries. Twenty-six of the buildings did not strictly conform to the law in regard to fire escapes. This was largely owing to the fact that tenants had sublet apartments to more families than the buildings were equipped for. But while there is possibility of fire in the Trinity houses, the danger is less than in many hundreds of the old tenement houses in, for example, closely built-up sections of the Borough of Brooklyn.

No instances of keeping on the premises large quantities of feed, hay, straw, paper stock or rags were seen except in the one case of the stable mentioned above and two cases of paper stock kept in cellars of small houses. There was only one bakery in any of the houses. This was in a three-story, two-family brick building. The oven was in the rear of the cellar. The ceiling directly above was sheathed with metal.

It should be noted, moreover, that the typical Trinity tenement is very different from the ordinary dumb-bell tenement commonly seen in the Borough of Manhattan. The so-called tenement houses belonging to the church are usually small buildings divided up for three or four families.

#### REPAIR.

Of the 334 buildings, fifty-four had leaks in the roofs. These were either very small, frequently barely enough to make a stain on the ceiling, or else, as in the three cases of bad leaks, were of recent origin.

The outer walls of the houses were defective in nineteen cases. This means that they had such obvious and usually small defects as broken boarding, loose bricks or cracks in brick work or torn metal sheathing.

The plastered walls and ceilings of the room in 278 of the houses were in good or fair condition throughout. In the re-



### PIGEONS.

PIGEONS WERE KEPT IN THREE HOUSES. THIS WAS THE WORST.



maintaining fifty-six buildings only, the walls of one or more rooms in each were more or less broken, loose or badly cracked.

In ten buildings the plaster of the hall walls and ceilings was somewhat defective on all floors; in twenty-four more it was defective on some floors; in the three hundred other houses the walls and ceilings of the halls were in good or fair repair throughout.

### THE TENANTS.

Thirty-eight per cent of the houses were occupied by a single family in each; 31% were occupied by two families each and 31% by as many as three families each. The average number of families to a house was 2.3, which is less than half the average number of families to a residence house in the Borough of Manhattan as shown by the census figures of 1900; it is less even than the average for the whole city of New York, including Brooklyn and The Bronx and Queens and Richmond with their large, open semi-rural areas. In but one instance was there found any considerable number of families living in a single house. This was the case of a large building with eighty-two rooms occupied by twenty-one families, built many years ago as a model tenement. It is the largest of a group around a central open space somewhat after the order of the Riverside Model Tenements in Brooklyn. The next largest number of families in one house is ten. There were only five houses in which this number was found and four of these were built as model tenements.

Comparing the number of persons to a house instead of the number of families shows a similar difference in favor of the Trinity properties. Thus, in the Boroughs of Manhattan and the Bronx in 1900, but 49.2% of the houses used wholly or partly for residence purposes were occupied by from 1 to 10 persons, in the Trinity properties 62% by this number of persons; in Manhattan and the Bronx 11.7% by from 11 to 15 persons, in the Trinity houses 26%; in Manhattan and the Bronx 7.1% by from 16 to 20 persons, in the Trinity buildings 7%; in Manhattan and the Bronx 32% by 21 persons or more, as contrasted with only 5% in the Trinity properties. The average number of persons to a house in the Trinity residence buildings is between ten and eleven.

In addition, it must be remembered, that the figures used for comparison with the statistics of the Trinity houses are taken from the census of 1900 and that overcrowding in the city at large has unquestionably increased since that time. If statistics

for New York City for the present year could be had, the contrast between Trinity houses and the general conditions would undoubtedly be still greater in favor of the Trinity properties. A more effective realization of conditions may be had by walking through the streets on which are a number of the Trinity dwelling houses and then walking through the next streets beyond, also residence streets but on which the houses are not owned by Trinity.

#### OVERCROWDING WITHIN THE ROOMS.

Of all of the 788 families (a family meaning any aggregate of persons keeping house together and their lodgers), 46 have one room each; but of these families living in one room 26 consist of only one person each; 14 of two persons each; 4 of three persons each; 1 of four persons, and one of six persons. The six persons found living in a one-room apartment consisted of a husband and wife and four small children. The one room occupied the entire first story of the house with the exception of the space taken up by the hall and was intended as a shop. A curtain was stretched across the front part of the room and at night both parts served as bedrooms. Light and ventilation were good. There were large windows at the rear to the yard and at the front to the street. The conditions were neither unsanitary nor indecent as far as the tenants were concerned. One fact frequently commented on by the tenants is the difference between the size of the rooms and of the yards into which the rear rooms open in the Trinity buildings and in the neighboring "flats."

Roughly classifying the occupied apartments as to presence or absence of overcrowding, the result is as follows: Good—647 apartments; Fair—106 apartments; Somewhat overcrowded—31 apartments; overcrowded—4 apartments.

Although even in the Trinity houses freedom from overcrowding is seen not to be universal, yet the fact that 39% of the families have more than one room to each person, frequently considerably more, is a remarkable showing for a district lying below 14th street. Even more surprising is the fact that the average number of persons to a room for all the families is less than one. Moreover, the lodger evil, which in the tenements of New York City makes the overcrowding situation far more serious from the point of view of sanitation and decency, is not a very important factor in the Trinity properties. Eighty-two per cent of all the families had no lodgers. No instances were discovered in which lodgers shared the sleeping rooms of members of the family. They had separate bedrooms not interfering



ONE OF THE FOUR OVERCROWDED APARTMENTS.  
HUSBAND AND WIFE AND FIVE CHILDREN OCCUPY THE TWO ROOMS.



TRINITY'S TENANTS.

COUPLE IN ONE HOUSE FOR OVER THIRTY YEARS.

with the privacy of the home life. Ordinary examples of families with lodgers were as follows: A family of four had seven rooms; two were rented out furnished; the remaining five were reserved for their own use. Another family had the whole house containing eleven rooms and rented out three rooms to three lodgers. A total of 428 lodgers were taken by 143 families, making an average of three lodgers to each family taking lodgers.

Over one-half of the 788 families occupying the houses were native Americans, classed according to the birth place of the head of the family. In the next largest group, 23% of the whole, the head of the family was of Irish birth; the Germans were next with 8%, and the Italians next with 4%. The remainder were distributed among a number of nationalities. One colored tenant was found. There were no Chinese or Japanese occupying apartments. Twenty-four families were reported to be Jewish. Not only were the heads of the families mainly native Americans, but a large proportion were native New Yorkers.

The saying that a New York family on an average moves once a year does not apply to the Trinity tenants. Many have been living in the same houses for over ten years; a few for over forty years and three for over fifty years. While 51% of all the families have occupied the same houses for five or more years, the tenants who have moved into the houses where they are now living within a year form only 18% of the total. It should also be noted that a very considerable proportion of the tenants who have moved into their present houses within the past few years report that they were formerly in other buildings owned by the church, so that their tenancy in Trinity buildings is for a considerably longer period than in the buildings at present occupied.

Whether the result of contentment or of apathy, the length of residence common among the tenants does not indicate active dissatisfaction. In visiting the houses it is interesting to note that the overwhelming majority of the tenants volunteer the expression of cordial liking for Trinity and its representatives. Comments are constantly made on the contrast between the accommodations offered for a given rent in the Trinity-owned residences and elsewhere, and many tenants speak of kindness in not pressing for rent in times of special embarrassment. Active resentment is expressed at the attacks made on Trinity which have come to the notice of the occupants of the houses.

The character of the tenants is shown to some extent by the occupations followed by the heads of the families. They cover

a wide range. At one end are clerks of court, law clerks, doctors in good practice, business men with down-town offices, and so on. At the other end are day-laborers, charwomen and the like. Truck drivers form the largest group; shopkeepers are another large class; clerks another and 'longshore and dock laborers are next.

No evidences of gambling or immorality in the houses were brought out in the investigation, except in one case where the tenants of an upper story reported that on a lower story was a woman of disreputable character. On a second visit to the house made a short time later, the apartment complained of was found vacated, the matter having been brought on the first visit to the notice of a representative of Trinity and apparently acted upon at once. No other complaints of this character in regard to the Trinity houses were made to the investigator, although respectable tenants are usually quick to report the existence of immorality in the houses in which they live or in those next door to them.

In 175 houses there were shops or other places of business. In all there were 211 such places. In a few cases there were two shops side by side on the first story. In one there were shops on both the first and second stories. Dressmakers and tailor shops were found in the largest number; there were thirteen of these. Next were the groceries, of which there were eleven. There were also nine candy or candy and stationery shops; nine cigar shops or cigar and stationery shops; nine restaurants; eight barber shops, etc., etc. The remaining places of business were of great variety. One Jewish synagogue was on the top story of a building used mainly for business purposes but containing one apartment. There were no saloons in any of the buildings.

## RENTS.

No one feature of the houses is more commented on by the tenants than the unchanging low rentals; that is, low according to Manhattan standards. There is undoubtedly a close relation between these and the comparative freedom from crowding in the buildings.

A detailed list of the rents charged in 311 buildings was furnished by the Trinity office, together with a statement of the number of rooms in each apartment, the number of apartments occupied by janitors or housekeepers, who usually have reduced rents, and the number of shops in the buildings. In the rent list the houses were divided into three groups,—forty-seven small





KITCHEN IN WORST HOUSE.

FOURTEEN HOUSES WERE IN BAD CONDITION. THIS WAS THE WORST.  
NOTE LOW CEILING AND UNCLEANLINESS.



TYPICAL KITCHEN.

NOTE CLEANLINESS. SEE ALSO LAUNDRY TUBS : 112 HOUSES HAVE TUBS.

tenement houses rented directly by Trinity; forty-seven small tenement houses rented to tenants who sublet; and 217 private houses.

This list was used as the basis for computing average rentals, which were found to be as follows: In the small tenement houses rented directly by Trinity Church to the different tenants, excluding apartments rented with shops and apartments occupied by janitors or housekeepers, and counting only separate residence apartments not let on reduced terms in return for services, the average monthly rent per apartment for 205 families was \$15.84, being an average monthly rent per room of \$4.24. The average monthly rental per house for forty-seven houses in this class is \$89.71, including rents from shops in the buildings.

In the small tenement houses rented by tenants who sublet, the average monthly rental per house is \$49.49. In the private houses in the list of this class, including some one-family and some two-family houses, the average monthly rent per house in the buildings without shops is \$46.49, in the buildings with shops \$51.90. The average rent per room in the private houses without shops is \$4.50 per month.

The tenants state that these rents are much lower for the same class of accommodations than are to be had elsewhere near the business district of the city.

#### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS.

In the report it has been sought to show clearly the existing condition of the Trinity properties, including their defects and their good qualities. According to the conditions disclosed in the investigation, the houses may be grouped into three classes.

The first includes buildings in good condition throughout or with only minor defects, such as small leaks in the roof, barely enough to stain the ceiling, defects in outside rain pipes, one or two rooms the walls of which need repapering or repainting. Most of the houses—that is 208 buildings, being 62% of the whole number examined—belong to this class.

The second class includes buildings with some or many defects, ranging from houses almost in the first class to houses almost in the third class. In this class there are 112 houses or 34% of the whole.

The third class includes houses in bad condition. This class includes 14\* houses, being 4% of the whole.

The impression made by the painstaking house-to-house study of the buildings is that the houses in good condition throughout (forming nearly two-thirds of the total) are of very great value

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\*Of these one has since been demolished, one has been vacated and improvements have been made in others.

to the community. They give at low rents quiet, comfortable, private living quarters, free from overcrowding, in the heart of the city and within walking distance of the business district. The cheaper houses compare very favorably with the model cottages conducted in Philadelphia by the Octavia Hill Association, for tenants of very limited means who are obliged to live in the city near their work. The more expensive buildings give still better accommodations with additional comforts and small luxuries.

There are defects in about one-third of the houses, which need improvement and cause criticism to be made of the owner; but on the other hand they are on the average in the class with buildings of the vicinity and frequently are much better. If they were torn down the probable result would be that the tenants would move into other houses in the same neighborhood, to which they are closely bound by business, political, church and other affiliations, and in these they would be more over-crowded, and would pay higher rents for accommodations probably not so good.

In the twelve houses now reported in bad condition the defects are largely defects of maintenance. Walls and ceilings are dirty, plaster is broken, plumbing fixtures are foul and in poor repair. There are some unlighted interior rooms also, but the greater number of defects are not inherent structural defects and the responsibility for them cannot always be definitely fixed.

It would seem very desirable, from the point of view of the tenants, that Trinity should improve the buildings needing improvement, and continue to maintain as residences the houses of all the grades with the exception of a very few old frame, or largely frame, buildings in poor condition and obviously not worth repair. The destruction of all the houses, followed by their replacement by business buildings, would displace a population of several thousand persons, driving them probably into inferior quarters at higher rents and increasing overcrowding. If some of the buildings must be destroyed, however—from the point of view of the tenants still—it would seem desirable to replace them by model tenements. These would be sanitary, safe homes with certain additional conveniences, although without many of the most prized advantages of the existing houses, such as large rooms, individual use of halls and yards, few steps to climb from the street, freedom from crowding and consequent dirt in the streets; play-space for children and reasonable quiet even with the windows open, which, where there are families with children is difficult to secure even in many of the model tenements with bedrooms on inner courts, where one crying baby keeps all the families on the court awake on a summer night and makes a strong inducement to keep the windows closed in winter.



TYPICAL HALL, IN PRIVATE HOUSE.  
 NOTE NEATNESS AND GOOD LIGHT AND VENTILATION.



HALL, IN WORST HOUSE SEEN.  
 NOTE DILAPIDATION AND DIRT AND NARROWNESS OF PASSAGEWAY.



TYPICAL PARLOR IN PRIVATE HOUSE.

In addition, more careful selection and supervision of the tenants in some of the houses, if possible, is needed. Neater and more orderly tenants could scarcely be found than those in many of the better class of buildings. But this cannot be said of the occupants of all the houses. Some need to be required to maintain a decidedly better standard of cleanliness if they are to be allowed to remain in the buildings. A general system of direct renting to all tenants, doing away with the present arrangement found in some cases of tenants' sub-letting parts of the buildings to others without the church office's even knowing of it, would probably do much to remedy the existing situation in this respect.

In general, it may be said that sensationally bad conditions were not found in the tenements and smaller dwelling houses owned and controlled by Trinity Church. A very considerable majority are in good condition; a minority have defects, and a very few are in bad condition.

It seems probable, however, that the residence houses on leased Trinity ground—numbering between two and three hundred—over which Trinity has no control, are, like many other tenements throughout the city, often in very bad condition. This is especially probable in the case of the houses on land held under leases which will soon end, where the owners do not wish to make repairs and improvements in buildings which will soon pass out of their hands. Until all the houses on Trinity's land are kept in good condition, they will always be made a ground of reproach to the church.

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#### STATEMENT FROM TRINITY.

LAWRENCE VEILLER, ESQ.,  
 Director Tenement House Committee,  
 Charity Organization Society,  
 105 East 22nd Street,  
 New York City.

*Dear Sir:—*

I have to acknowledge the receipt from you of the report of the inspection made at our request by the Charity Organization Society, through its Tenement House Committee, of the residence houses owned by the Corporation of Trinity Church.

I am instructed by the Vestry to write you this note of thanks and to express their appreciation of the completeness and thoroughness with which the work has been done.

With reference to the management of the property, I beg to call your attention to the statement of the intentions of the Vestry in regard to this property contained in a sermon preached by our Rector, Dr. Manning, at Trinity Church on the 18th day of April, last.

He then said, alluding to the difficulties inherent in the subject, as follows:

“Whatever the difficulties, however, I say unhesitatingly that, as property owners, our responsibility for the condition of any dwelling house property owned by the Parish is the most vital and fundamental, and one of the most sacred of all the obligations resting upon us, and that we are bound to do everything in our power to meet this responsibility. The long leases under which much of the property has been held have many of them expired, and we are able now to deal with this property in a way which, some time ago, would not have been possible.

Since becoming rector I have given a great deal of time and thought and work to this question. In company with members of the Vestry I have visited many of the houses on our property. Plans long in hand have been carried forward, new plans of far-reaching importance have been formed, and work upon some of them is already under way. I hold that in this matter we ought to set not only a high standard, but the very highest. Far better, if necessary, that all our charities should be given up and all our churches and schools closed than that we should maintain any of them by revenue derived from property in an unsanitary or questionable condition.

In discussing this subject I have used the word Parish instead of Corporation. I have done this purposely, because so far as our responsibility is concerned, there can be no distinction between these two. Trinity Parish is a religious institution, not a business institution, and while, like every other organization in this world, it has, and must have, its business side, its business cannot be separated from its religion. As Rector of the Parish my primary responsibility is for its religious acts, but I claim also my full share of responsibility for its business acts, and I have found in the Vestry a most earnest desire that this whole matter of our property shall be dealt with not merely from the business point of view, but from the standpoint of religion, of social responsibility and of enlightened citizenship.”

Since this sermon was preached many of the plans alluded

to by the Rector have been matured and are now being carried out. The Vestry has appropriated very large sums of money for the erection of new buildings, to be raised by borrowing, or by sale of real estate, for, as will appear in the Parish Year Book now in press, the entire income of the church from its property of all kinds during the twelve months ending July 31, 1909, was but \$766,787.34, of which over \$140,000 was paid in taxes and water rents and \$308,000 in maintenance of the property; and the balance, which was wholly spent for carrying on the religious, educational and charitable work of the parish, was, in fact, insufficient for that purpose.

The dwelling houses on Trinity's lands were not erected by the Church, but have come into its possession on the expiration of ground leases. As leases expire, the question of the renewal term is a matter of chief concern to the lessee, who frequently prefers to renew, but is unwilling to assume the obligation of a long term. In such cases, lessees who desire to renew, are required to put and maintain the buildings in good sanitary condition in full compliance with the law, otherwise the Church pays the fair value and takes the buildings over, subject to existing defects. If structurally good, the Church undertakes to put them in proper repair, and thereafter to keep them in as good order as the personal sense of orderliness of the occupants will permit.

Technical violations not infrequently occur without notice to the Church through the acts of the tenants, but are corrected as speedily as possible when disclosed. For instance, buildings adequately equipped with fire-escapes when rented may subsequently become technical violations because tenants have sublet to additional persons classed as "families." Such faults are corrected when known by reducing the number of occupants.

The cost of repairing buildings is often very considerable, because the lessees have exhausted the property beyond their willingness or ability to restore it to fit condition. Of course, any defects which inspection reveals, either in the property which Trinity has long owned or has newly acquired, are and will be remedied as soon as practicable. In many instances, however, the Church removes the buildings entirely, and it now holds many lots vacant, because conditions prevailing in the district do not justify the erection of new dwellings of the same class, and because there may be no demand for a business building on a particular lot. The erection of the ordinary four or five story tenement on a single lot is contrary to the policy of the Church, and it has not erected a building of that character. In considering the property as a whole, it must be realized that

the Church is compelled to deal with the transitory condition which belongs to that section of the city, and that Trinity's problem concerning its own land is only a part of the problem relating to the entire neighborhood. Through improvements made by itself as well as by encouraging improvement by others, the Church is seeking to aid in the development of the district by replacing old buildings with new. It sells its lands as opportunity offers, invariably with a covenant for the erection of modern business buildings. No opportunity has been permitted for the erection of the city tenement house of ordinary type. The Church itself, has improved its own property with substantial and extensive buildings, including factories, warehouses and groups of model tenements. Several new buildings are now nearing completion, and a scheme of improvement on a large scale is gradually being worked out. The Church already has a debt of about two million of dollars incurred for this purpose. To what extent future improvements shall include model tenements, is a subject for careful consideration, and whether it will be possible or desirable to continue to maintain any large number of the present dwellings for residence purposes, also presents a question which cannot now be definitely determined.

Yours very truly,

DAVID B. OGDEN,  
Chairman Property Committee,  
Vestry of Trinity Church.



